United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/174

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 9
Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-11697
1411697

Please recycle

Afrophobia*

In its resolution 21/33 adopted on 28 September 2012 the Human Rights Council deplored " the special form of discrimination faced by people of African descent known as 'Afrophobia'".

The active use by the Human Rights Council of the term afrophobia was in response to the recommendations of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent at its previous sessions. In the report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent from its twelfth session adopted on 26 April 2013 the Working Group affirmed that "The recognition by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 21/33 of the term "Afrophobia", as had been recommended by the Working Group, requires an active and systematic follow-up in order to assure the full implementation of this important assertion of the special and unique form of discrimination faced by people of African descent and assuring its equal use with analogous terms that are used to address the stigmatization and prejudice against ethnic, religious and other vulnerable groups."

However one group of countries, the European Union, has regularly objected to the introduction of the term "afrophobia" both in negotiations on resolutions and in statements at the Council. In its statement to the Human Rights Council on 27 September 2011 the EU stated that "establishing a hierarchy of those affected by racial discrimination is not acceptable. Therefore the EU rejects the introduction of potentially harmful terminology as "afrophobia".

In the context of the above it should be noted that the" afrophobia" term has gained an increased use in European countries and also been included in government ordinances relating to work against discrimination in one EU country, Sweden, without "harmful" consequences. The term is for example actively used by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention and recently the Swedish Minister for Integration commissioned the Multicultural Centre to conduct a systematic review of the current situation on afrophobia experienced by Swedes of African descent and which report was presented on February 3, 2014. The report indicated that afrophobia, discrimination against persons of African descent, is widespread and a problem in Sweden and will hopefully help the government to better address the situation. This demonstrates the importance of this form of recognition of discrimination against people of African descent.

Anti-black racism targeted against people of African descent was the first form of discrimination to be given a name when the term "negrophobia" was introduced in the United States in the 1830:ties and used in the campaigns against slavery and for racial equality. "Negrophobia" for example predated the appearance of "anti-Semitism" term by many decades. Afrophobia is only a modernized form of the older outdated term.

In the United Nations the "negrophobia" term was first included in the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance to "examine according to his mandate incidents of contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, any form of discrimination against Blacks, Arabs and Muslims, xenophobia, negrophobia, anti-Semitism, and related intolerance" as adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session in 1994. The "negrophobia" term disappeared in connection with the World Conference Against Racism and its early follow up for the only reason that any term including "negro" had become totally outdated and unacceptable, in particular in the English language. While the replacement of "negrophobia" with afrophobia was discussed in that connection, it did not take place and therefore deprived people of African descent the recognition it had previously had in listings of existing forms of discrimination. It is therefore a timely measure that the Human Rights Council and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent has taken to reintroduce this recognition of the special and unique form of discrimination that people of African descent face.

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*The World Against Racism Network (WARN) also share the views expressed in this statement.

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/175

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by the Penal Reform International, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-11633
1411633

Please recycle

The question of the death penalty

Penal Reform International (PRI)[1] welcomes the High Level Panel on the Question of the Death Penalty. We will focus in this statement on the conditions on death row and the impact these conditions have on the rights and wellbeing of prisoners and their families.

Although they should enjoy the same rights as other prisoners under international human rights standards and norms, prisoners on death row are often detained in conditions that are far worse than those for the rest of the prison population. They suffer isolation for long and indeterminate periods of time, inactivity, inadequate basic physical provisions, have limited links and contacts with their relatives and lawyers, and are sometimes treated violently and without respect for human dignity.

Prisoners are often held on death row for many years while they go through lengthy appeal procedures, or when a state has suspended executions but has not abolished the death penalty or commuted existing sentences. As a result of these conditions, as well as the stress of facing a death sentence, death row prisoners are vulnerable to mental strain and physical and emotional neglect for months, years, and even decades.

Conditions on death row often amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as prohibited in Article 7 of the ICCPR. Some or all of these conditions can also contribute to 'death row phenomenon', which is characterised by spending long periods of time in restrictive conditions while awaiting death. In 1989 the European Court of Human Rights found the 'death-row phenomenon' constituted inhuman and degrading punishment.[2] The Court found that exposing persons 'to the very long period of time spent on death row in such extreme conditions, with the ever present and mounting anguish of awaiting execution of the death penalty (...) would expose [them] to a real risk of treatment going beyond the threshold set by article 3 [of the European Convention on Human Rights]'.[3]

The UN Human Rights Committee has expressed concern about poor living conditions of death row inmates, including undue restrictions on visits and correspondence,[4] small cell size and lack of proper food and exercise,[5] extreme temperatures, lack of ventilation, cells infested with insects, and inadequate time spent outside cells,[6] and has called on states to improve these conditions in line with the requirements of the provisions of the ICCPR, including Article 7 (prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment) and Article 10(1) (respect for the human dignity of persons deprived of their liberty).

The UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment declared the overcrowding, extreme temperatures, inadequate nutrition and isolation typical of the experience of death row prisoners may amount to cruel treatment.[7] The Special Rapporteur also identified the practice of handcuffing and shackling with leg irons of death row inmates 24 hours per day and in all circumstances (i.e. including during meals, visits to the toilet, etc.) as inhuman and degrading, and serving only as an additional form of punishment of someone already subjected to the stress associated with having been sentenced to death.[8]

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[1] Penal Reform International (PRI) is an international, non-governmental organisation with Consultative Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Council of Europe, and Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. It aims to develop and promote international standards for the administration of justice, reduce the unnecessary use of imprisonment and promote the use of alternative sanctions which encourage reintegration while taking into account the interests of victims. PRI also works for the prevention of torture and ill-treatment, for a proportionate and sensitive response to women and juveniles in conflict with the law, and promotes the abolition of the death penalty.

[2] *Soering v. UK*, Series A, No. 161, 7 July 1989, para. 111.

[3] Article 3 of the ECHR prohibits torture, and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

[4] UN document CCPR/CO/79/Add.102, 19 November 1998, para. 21.

[5] UN document CCPR/CO/71/UZB, 26 April 2001, para. 10.

[6] *Safarmo Kurbanova v. Tajikistan*, views of the Human Rights Committee, Communication No. 1096/2002, UN document CCPR/C/79/D/1096/2002, 12 November 2003, para. 7.8.

[7] UN document E/CN.4/2006/6/Add.4, 20 December 2005.

[8] UN document E/CN.4/2006/6/Add.6 (10 March 2006), para. 68.

Death row prisoners are entitled to the same basic conditions as other categories of prisoners, as set out in the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners[9] and elsewhere. Their treatment and care in prison should be determined by individual need rather than the type of sentence they are serving, which may indeed require them to receive a higher standard of treatment. In resolution 1996/15,[10] the UN ECOSOC urged UN member states to apply the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners 'in order to keep to a minimum the suffering of prisoners under sentence of death and to avoid any exacerbation of such suffering'.

Additionally, the knowledge of having a relative detained on death row can be deeply distressing for the children and other family members of persons sentenced to death. Children can experience psychological, behavioural, financial, educational and (physical and mental) health problems related to a parent's death sentence, including PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) symptoms. Such impacts can happen at any stage of the criminal justice process. Having a parent at risk of execution appears to be more consistently negative and damaging for children than having a parent imprisoned. Children's right to a relationship with parents from whom they are separated (Article 9, Convention on the Rights of the Child) can in practice be denied by restrictive regulations on visits to death row, including inaccessible locations of prisons, heavy limits on the frequency of visits and age restrictions on who can visit death row.

PRI would like to recall the position of the Human Rights Committee, mentioned in the 2013 report of the UN Secretary-General on the Question of the Death Penalty (A/HRC/21/29), that states should provide convicted persons and their family members with advance notice of the date and time of execution. Further, states should allow family members, particularly children, a final visit to say goodbye; this visit should be private and allow physical contact between the convicted person and family members.

For those whose (potential) death sentence is replaced by a period of imprisonment, whether at time of sentencing or later, many of the same problems may remain. Sentences should provide the offender with a meaningful opportunity for rehabilitation and reintegration back into society, which means there should be the possibility of release. Conditions of imprisonment for prisoners serving life or long-term imprisonment are often worse than for other categories of prisoner, and punitive conditions of detention and less favourable treatment are known to be particularly prevalent for reprieved death row prisoners. Examples include separation from the rest of the prison population, inadequate living facilities, excessive use of handcuffing, prohibition of communication with other prisoners, inadequate health facilities, extended use of solitary confinement and limited visit entitlements.

The level of security applied to life-sentenced prisoners should be based on an individual risk and needs assessment, rather than having a single regime for life-prisoners. Not all life-sentenced prisoners are, for instance, dangerous and need to be detained in high security prisons or segregated from other categories of prisoner. The realities in fact often indicate otherwise: the majority of life-sentenced prisoners are generally better behaved in prison compared to other categories of prisoner, and have lower reconviction rates on release.[11]

For further information of international standards and norms related to prison conditions, see Penal Reform International's information pack on *Alternative Sanctions to the Death Penalty: Life and Long-Term Imprisonment.*

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[9] Adopted by the First UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955, and approved by the UN ECOSOC resolutions 663 C (XXIV) of 31 July 1957 and 2076 (LXII) of 13 May 1977.

[10] Adopted by the UN ECOSOC on 23 July 1996.

[11] See, for example, *Management of Long-term and Life- Sentenced Prisoners Internationally in the context of a Human Rights Strategy*, Andrew Coyle (2005) in N. Browne and S. Kandelia (eds.) *Centre for Capital Punishment Studies occasional paper series three: managing effective alternatives to capital punishment*, London: CCPS; or *Alternatives to the death penalty – the United Kingdom Experience in Council of Europe*, Hodgkinson, P., in *Death Penalty: beyond abolition* Strasbourg: Council of Europe: 2004.

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/176

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 5
Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Joint written statement* submitted by the Asian Legal Resource Centre, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status; Amnesty International, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project, International Service for Human Rights, Reporters Sans Frontieres International - Reporters Without Borders International, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status; Article 19 - International Centre Against Censorship, non-governmental organizations on the roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Selection and appointment of new mandate holder on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression*

Summary:

- In June 2014, the President of the UN Human Rights Council (the Council) will appoint a new Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- This UN expert on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression will serve two terms of three years each.
- Candidates must have the required expertise and experience in the field of the mandate, must be independent and impartial and show a high level of personal integrity and objectivity.
- The following actors may nominate candidates:
    - Governments;
    - Regional Groups;
    - International organisations (e.g. OHCHR);
    - Non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
    - National human rights institutions (NHRIs) in compliance with Paris Principles;
    - Other human rights bodies & individuals.
- Individual candidates and candidates nominated by entities shall submit an application for each specific mandate, together with personal data and a motivation letter no longer than 600 words. OHCHR will prepare a list of candidates who applied for each vacancy.

This document is part of a series of criteria developed for vacant positions as special procedures mandate holders. Its intention is to support all stakeholders in the identification of and outreach to highly qualified and independent candidates for vacant positions. States may also use the document to strengthen national consultations processes for the identification of suitable candidates.

It is also intended as a checklist that can be used by the Council's Consultative Group and the President of the Human Rights Council to ensure that only highly qualified and independent candidates are considered and appointed.

Background:

ARTICLE 19: Global Campaign for Free Expression, Amnesty International, the Committee to Protect Journalists, the International Service for Human Rights, and Reporters Without Borders, submit this joint written statement on behalf of the signatories.

The signatory organisations call on Governments, NGOs and others, including relevant professional networks, to use this checklist to identify eligible candidates for the upcoming vacancy for the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

We urge Governments to consult civil society and to disseminate the vacancy widely, e,g. through media advertisement, so as to encourage candidates to apply for this vacancy.

All applicants must submit an application for each specific mandate through the OHCHR online application system, which will be made available at: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/OutreachEN.aspx

Prospective mandate holders should be aware that this is a voluntary, unpaid role. They would not receive salary or other financial compensation, except for travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance of 'experts on mission'. It will require a substantial time commitment from the individual, including readiness to travel and respond to urgent

situations, as explained in the checklist.

Checklist for selection of candidates for mandate of Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protections of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Formal criteria:

According to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, Annex, the following general criteria will be of paramount importance while nominating, selecting and appointing mandate holders:

- Expertise;
- Experience in the field of the mandate;
- Independence;
- Impartiality;
- Personal integrity;
- Objectivity.

Due consideration should be given to gender balance and equitable geographic representation, and to an appropriate representation of different legal systems. Eligible candidates should be highly qualified individuals who possess established competence, relevant expertise and extensive professional experience in the field of human rights (paras. 39-41).

Independence:

According to Council Resolution 5/1, 'individuals holding decision-making positions in Government or in any other organisation or entity which may give rise to a conflict of interest with the responsibilities inherent to the mandate shall be excluded.'

At a minimum, this requires independence of prospective mandate holders from the executive of governments or from intergovernmental organisations, which may be the subject of a communication or mission within the terms of the mandate.

The conflict of interest provision has also been interpreted to mean that candidates are expected to clarify how, if appointed, they would deal with any perceived or actual conflict of interest in relation to governments, inter-governmental organisations, or non-governmental organisations.

Qualifications & expertise:

In its Decision 6/102 of 27 September 2007, the Council approved technical and objective requirements for candidates eligible for special procedures mandates.

The following checklist is intended as an interpretive aid for those requirements:

1. **Qualifications (and skills):** relevant educational qualifications or equivalent professional experience in the field of human rights

Checklist:

- A post-graduate university degree or equivalent in law, social sciences or in a discipline directly related to the mandate, preferably with a focus on international human rights law, would be highly desirable;
- Academic publications or other published material (articles, studies, reports, research papers or any similar written material demonstrating in-depth knowledge) addressing issues relevant to the mandate, from a human rights perspective;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in at least one of the UN working languages (English, French and Spanish – knowledge of other widely-used or official UN languages, such as Arabic, Chinese or Russian, would be an asset);
- Extensive experience in public speaking (for example in expert seminars) and in communicating at senior levels with governments, UN officials, the business community, the media and other relevant stakeholders.

2. **Relevant expertise:** knowledge of international human rights instruments and standards; knowledge of institutional mandates related to the United Nations or other international or regional organisations' work in the area of human rights; proven work experience in the field of human rights.

Checklist:

- Extensive knowledge of international human rights law and standards;
- At least 5 years of progressively responsible work experience in the field of human rights relating to the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including in human rights research, monitoring, reporting, investigating and advocacy;
- Excellent knowledge of the international and regional legal frameworks, case law and current trends relevant to the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including its relationship to and importance in ensuring respect for all other human rights and freedoms;
- Practical experience in promoting and protecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression where there may be perceived or actual tensions with other individual rights or collective interests, particularly in the context of new technologies;
- Excellent knowledge of institutional mandates of the United Nations or other international or regional organisations in the area of human rights.

3. **Established competence:** nationally, regionally or internationally recognised competence related to human rights.

Checklist:

- A demonstrated commitment to universal human rights law, standards and values;
- Recognised knowledge and expertise of responding to developments and challenges in the field of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, in particular a deep understanding of how new technologies impact freedom of opinion and expression globally;
- Experience in applying freedom of opinion and expression principles, in particular in the context of access to information, journalism and media freedom;
- Experience at national, regional and/or international level in developing legislation, policies and mechanisms for the protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and in creating a safe and enabling environment for the exercise of this right, including addressing issues related to intimidation, reprisals, and impunity;
- Extensive experience with and proven commitment to working and/or interacting with individuals, groups and civil society whose right to freedom of opinion and expression may have been violated or restricted;
- Proven awareness of the particular challenges and risks specific individuals and groups may face and their

particular protection needs when exercising their right to freedom of opinion and expression, including: journalists, media workers, writers, bloggers and artists; human rights defenders; women; ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities; non-nationals, migrants, refugees and internally displaced people; indigenous people; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; members of political opposition groups; people with disabilities; people in a disadvantaged socioeconomic situations, and people who experience age discrimination.

- Experience in interacting with actors whose work directly impacts on the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression, such as:
  - All branches of government, including legislators, the judiciary, ministers, and civil servants;
  - Law enforcement agencies;
  - Relevant regulatory or administrative bodies, including, where applicable, media regulatory authorities and information ombudsmen;
  - National human rights institutions and equality bodies;
  - Corporations and business enterprises, particularly in the mass media, telecommunication, ICT, surveillance, and online-security sectors;
- Experience in the development and delivery of human rights and rule of law assistance/capacity building, including the training of law enforcement and legal professionals and other officials responsible for the protection of human rights;
- Experience in conducting both academic and field research and in carrying out fact-finding missions.

4. Flexibility/readiness and availability of time to perform effectively the functions of the mandate and to respond to its requirements, including conducting visits, preparing reports and attending Human Rights Council and General Assembly sessions.

Checklist:

- Willingness and ability to conduct in-country investigations, in all regions of the world, into government policies, legislation and practices affecting the enjoyment of the right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- Energy, determination and vision to promote and protect the right to freedom of opinion and expression wherever it is at risk;
- A commitment to uphold the integrity, independence and impartiality of the Special Rapporteur's mandate and the special procedures system as a whole;
- Willingness and ability to devote a substantial proportion of working hours to fulfilling the mandate, which includes undertaking two country missions per year, preparing and presenting reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly (such as the annual thematic report, and country mission and follow-up reports), attending seminars and other UN meetings and acting on individual cases of violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- Willingness and ability to act urgently when cases or situations so require.

Appointment Procedure:

Details and formalities about the nomination, selection and appointment of mandate holders are explained on the OHCHR website at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx

Applications have to be submitted through an online system, which will be made available on the above website.

*Committee to Protect Journalists; Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance; Africa Freedom of Information Centre NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/177

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Society of Iranian Women Advocating Sustainable Development, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[13 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-11766
1411766

Please recycle

Women and Sustainable Development in Iran

Iran, being an arid/semi-arid country, has been very successful in providing access to safe drinking water and sanitation to its urban and rural population. However, the country has performed weakly in reversing the loss of forests, energy use, CO2 emissions and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs and all have shown a deteriorating trend. Iran also needs greater efforts in protecting biological biodiversity. Despite these notable progresses towards sustainable development, there are still shortcoming which need to be addressed.

In Iran as many societies environmental problems caused by air pollution, noise pollution ,water pollution, waste management , manufacturing crisis and uncontrolled urbanization. Howeverthe use of agricultural pesticides, destruction of forests, waterways and redirect even natural disasters is due to lack of knowledge of individuals, groups and organizations, non-governmental or non-participation in social and economic activities.

Women are one of the major groups which effected by the Environment and also one of the group which effect on climate change .Their activities will effect on social life and family life too.

Fortunately, women today are active to protect the environment and sustainable development through organizations such as , environmental NGOs, health volunteers, council and community support ....

Agriculture plays the main role in the economy of our country, which provides 1/3 of jobs occupation , and supports 4/5 nutrition need of the country .Agriculture as ½ non-oil export of the country supplies 9/10 industrial needs for agriculture products which today is 1/5 GNP.

Countries agriculture depend on activities of 4.2milion rural families .Rural women are the main point in these production unite and economical structure of the family cannot sustain without their presence. Rural women's participation in economical activities cannot be neglected. Although due to our social culture .Their role in rural development are not transparent.

Today unfortunately poverty in the family come due to Sanction and social high level of life .Lack of sufficient income makes the family to abuse the natural resources and continue environmental degradation ., for instance, using trees in rural areas as a heating system is due to the lack of access to fossil fuels.

Poverty eradication and optimal use of natural resources is a obligation for our country's Development .Therefore we as Environmental NGO's have established a NET WORK with the name of PROMOTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT .We urgently active for human poverty and the optimum use of renewable and non-renewable natural resources. As far as Environmental problems will not effect in limited areas and has no boundaries. Any disaster will effect whole world and will leave behind negative effects.

As all leaders agreed and signed in Brazil on 2012 and said We, the heads of State and Government and high level representatives, having met at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20-22 June 2012, with full participation of civil society, renew our commitment to sustainable development, and to ensure the promotion of economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations .Therefore The NET WORK OF PROMOTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT are active for sustainable development of our country.and eradicating poverty is the greatest challenge. In this regard we are committed to free families from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.

Currently in our country due to the complexity of environmental issues, environmental factors, abuse has become one of the most challenging situation.

Environmental NGOs in Iran, offer planned green economy based on sustainable development and poverty alleviation in the framework of a sustainable development goals of the Islamic RepublicIRAN

We 've detected that poverty eradication, development planning and implementing global strategies instability is possible.

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/178

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Joint written statement* submitted by CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen Participation, non-governmental organizations in general consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-11774

1411774

Please recycle

A Call for Truth and Justice in South Sudan

Citizens for Peace and Justice (CPJ) and CIVICUS are deeply concerned by the dire human rights situation in South Sudan. The conflict first erupted in Juba, South Sudan's capital, on 15 December 2013, before quickly spreading to the state capitals of Bor, Bentiu and Malakal. Within a matter of weeks, what started as a political dispute between President Salva Kiir, former Vice-President Riek Machar, and a number of senior politicians had engulfed much of the country in full-scale civil war. Without robust international support, there is little hope that the perpetrators of the violence will be held to account, that people will know the truth of what happened to their loved ones, and that the country will be able to come to terms with its violent past.

Context

In the past two months, international and South Sudanese organizations have documented serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including targeted killings of civilians, sexual violence, torture and the use of child soldiers. Entire towns and villages have been razed to the ground, property has been looted or destroyed, and parties to the conflict have deliberately targeted places of refuge, such as churches and hospitals. Government security sector personnel and non-state armed groups have stolen humanitarian relief supplies and equipment and killed humanitarian personnel. According to the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, there is also evidence of the use of cluster bombs in Jonglei state.

The crisis has had a devastating impact on the lives of the South Sudanese people. An estimated 900,000 people—almost ten percent of population—have been displaced in just under two months, according to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Many of the displaced have sought shelter in UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) camps in affected urban areas. The rainy season is fast approaching, and these displaced populations will face a catastrophic health emergency if the camps are not adequately equipped. It is therefore of utmost urgency that the government and UNMISS ensure that camp conditions meet international standards and that the necessary protection is put in place for displaced persons to return home.

A Culture of Impunity

A pervasive culture of impunity has fueled the current violence. Since the end of Sudan's civil war in 2005, serious crimes have been committed in the context of inter-communal and politically motivated conflicts, forced disarmament programs and government counter-insurgency campaigns. Despite repeated calls for justice from affected populations, there has been virtually no accountability. South Sudanese lack confidence in the ability of the justice system to identify, investigate and prosecute wrongdoers. This has contributed to a continuous cycle of revenge and counter revenge between neighboring communities. Until South Sudanese are provided with viable justice options, people will continue to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves and to seek retribution for violent acts against their communities.

The Government of South Sudan's response to atrocities committed during the current conflict has been insufficient. The government has announced at least three separate investigations, and approximately 100 individuals have reportedly been arrested for the targeted killings that took place in Juba during the early days of the conflict. However, little information has been provided about the nature of the investigations or the charges that are being brought. Nor is there any prospect of court proceedings being open to the public or of the accused being guaranteed their right to a fair trial. Given the government's role in the conflict, its track record with past investigations, and the tenor of public statements from senior officials, it is unlikely that government processes will be able to ensure victims' right to a remedy or to the truth.

Gaps in Monitoring and Documentation

Intergovernmental agencies have made an effort to investigate violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, but much more is needed. On 30 December 2013, the African Union Peace and Security Council

(AUPSC) called for the creation of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights violations and other abuses committed in South Sudan, and to make recommendations on the best ways to ensure accountability, reconciliation and healing among South Sudanese communities. Six weeks later, the members of the Commission have yet to be named, the terms of reference have not been published, and there are serious concerns about whether the Commission will actually be in a position to conduct thorough investigations.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has promised a report on the rights violations that have occurred. Through the UNMISS human rights section, OHCHR has access to some of the most comprehensive reports on the human rights situation that currently exist. This information is critical to providing affected populations with a better understanding of events and to revealing to the international community the seriousness of the crimes that have taken place.

Since the earliest days of the conflict, South Sudanese human rights organizations have worked to document human rights abuses in the country, but they have faced serious difficulties as a result of obstruction by government personnel and other armed groups. A number of prominent human rights defenders have been forced to flee the country due to threats and acts of violence targeted against people who call for criticize the government and call for justice. The public space for engaging the government on issues relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms has been shrinking for several years and the outbreak of this crisis has closed off what little space was left.

Recommendations

In light of the preceding observations, CPJ and CIVICUS request the Human Rights Council and its member states to:

- Encourage OHCHR and UNMISS to publish their report as soon as possible and to provide more regular updates and reporting on violations of international human rights and humanitarian law;
- Provide robust technical support to the AU Commission of Inquiry, particularly to ensure that its investigations seek to identify those responsible for crimes with a view to ensuring they are held accountable.
- Monitor government investigations and press for them to be conducted in accordance with international standards.
- Support human rights investigations by South Sudanese civil society actors and insist that the government cease censorship and threats to individuals critical of its human rights record.
- Request commitments from the Government of South Sudan and the SPLM-Opposition to respect people's freedom of association and expression and to allow civil society to publicly discuss the challenges facing the nation in a candid manner without fear of intimidation or violence.
- Encourage visits by special rapporteurs to assess the human rights situation in the country, identify key issues of concern, and develop recommendations for how the Government of South Sudan and other armed groups might address them. Visits by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association would be especially relevant.
- Recognize the crisis in South Sudan as a situation of major concern and establish an independent expert mandate on the human rights situation in the country.

Citizens for Peace and Justice (CPJ), a coalition of South Sudanese NGOs, without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/179

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Joint written statement* submitted by Union of Arab Jurists, Arab Lawyers Union, Arab Organization for Human Rights, General Arab Women Federation, Indian Movement "Tupaj Amaru", International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development - VIDES, Nord-Sud XXI - North-South XXI, Organisation Mondiale des associations pour l'éducation prénatale, United Towns Agency for North-South Cooperation, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, Indian Council of South America (CISA), International Educational Development, Inc., International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM), World Peace Council, non-governmental organizations on the roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Systematic and Widespread Unlawful Arrests in Iraq

The well-known practice of arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions (including detentions in secret facilities), enforced disappearances, torture and other forms of ill-treatment in Iraq constitutes a serious violation of the international human rights law, international criminal law and international humanitarian law. The Iraqi government and its state agents consistently implement policies and carry out actions that infringe the right to liberty and security of a person, the right to a fair trial, including habeas corpus and an absolute prohibition of torture and ill-treatment. These violations are widespread and systematic. The perpetrators know that their conduct is part of an attack against civilians, which amount to crimes against humanity in accordance with international law. The international community should undertake immediate and effective measures to halt this practice and to ensure that the perpetrators brought to justice and victims restored in rights and compensated.

Systematic and Widespread Unlawful Arrests

An alarmingly increasing rate of targeted and random arrests without warrant, charges or based on suspicion of involvement in terroristic activity further agitate the sectarian tensions and cause more violence in Iraq. This policy was master-minded during the illegal occupation to fuel hatred and create false divisions in the Iraqi society. The current Iraqi administration continues this misconduct in a systematic and widespread manner. The arrests are often indiscriminate in nature and represent a regular well-known practice with the excessive use of force, including lethal force during the arrest raids, especially those conducted by the Minister of Interior, Counter-Terrorism Directorate and the Ministry of Defence. The majority of the arbitrary arrests are sectarian and politically motivated under the pretext of the fight against terrorism. The sectarian nature of these attacks against certain religious group represents a discrimination based on distinctive characteristics. The perpetrators are well aware of the sectarian policy. The afore-mentioned fulfil the elements of a crime against humanity.

The arrests in the interest of the supposed public safety and security target either a specific political figure or a particular group. Several non-governmental organisations, pointed out numerously through urgent appeals, written statements and press releases, the majority of arbitrary arrests based on the prefabricated charges of terrorism were undertaken with a political agenda in mind[1]. Even those persons who were part of the so-called political process were targeted seemingly on a sectarian basis[2].

The Iraqi society also suffers from massive arbitrary arrests. The following examples give a clear snapshot of the situation: the arrest of approximately 1,500 persons following the direct order of al-Maliki[3], indiscriminate arrest of at least 4000 persons in one single act before the summit of the Arab League in March 2012.

Further alarming waves of arrests occurred in August 2013 under the campaign officially named "Thár al-Shuhadá" or "Martyrs' Revenge". More than 1,000 persons arrested and dozens killed in the operation around Baghdad and Al-Anbar and other provinces as "terrorists", which also undermines the presumption of innocence. "The name of the

[1] - See: http://www.gicj.org/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=42

[2] - For example in the cases of Ahmed al-Alwani (Member of the Parliament), Rafa al-Essawi (then Finance Minister), Tariq al-Hashemi (Vice-President).

[3] "*Iraq: Mass Arrests, Incommunicado Detentions*", Human Rights Watch, May 2012 at http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/05/15/iraq-mass-arrests-incommunicado-detentions

campaign itself – 'Martyrs' Revenge' is indicative of Maliki's promotion of revenge and not only gives a sense of justification for the mass arrests being executed but incites sectarian support for a highly unjustly-executed operation'[4] [5]

Detention in Violation of Due Process and Fair Trial Guarantees

The illegal invasion to Iraq resulted in the destruction of the entire Iraqi judicial system. '..the dismantling of state institutions under the occupation and methods introduced by the US-Forces, who established the Special Police Commandos and set up prisons like Abu Ghraib.'[6] The corruption in the administration of justice undermines the credibility of justice system and casts doubts on conviction of persons accused in such a serious crime as an act of terrorism. The interference of the executive in the affairs of the judiciary undermines one of the core elements of a democratic state such as separation of powers. During the 79th anniversary of the Iraqi Bar Association the Iraqi Prime Minister expressed congratulations to those lawyers who refuse to represent the 'terrorist' detainees and clear threats to those lawyers who defend them is one of the outrageous examples of public interference.[7]

Serious violations of the arrested person's rights provided for in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and other core international instruments that Iraq has ratified represent regular and widespread practice. The fate of an arrestee can be easily predicted in advance: unlawful detention, torture and/or ill-treatment and questionable sentence. Following the arbitrariness of arrests, the detainees face abuse of due process and fair trial guarantees. There are a number of complaints on lengthy and unreasonable delays in informing the detainees about charges against them. The practice of torture and ill-treatment during interrogations in the places of detention run by the Ministry of Interior and Anti-Terrorism Directorate are documented. The confessions obtained by torture and ill-treatment are often used as evidence in the court to convict in the absence of credible evidentiary material. According to the Iraqi law, the accused are provided with free legal representation, but there are complains that the accused meet the state-appointed lawyers for the first time at the court proceeding.

These allegations represent serious violations of customary international law, the provisions of the ICCPR and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment. The most disappointing is that, as noted by the report of the UN Mission in Iraq, the government of Iraq fails at making significant progress in implementing the legal, institutional and policy reforms to ensure the respect for the provisions of the Iraqi Constitution and international human rights law.[8]

Enforced Disappearances and Secret Detentions

The Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which Iraq has ratified in 2010, provides that *"no one shall be subjected to enforced disappearance"* and that *"no exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification for enforced disappearance."* According to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal

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[4] *"GICJ appeals to High Commissioner for Human Rights and Special Rapporteurs on the mass human rights violations in Iraq"*, August 2013 at:
http://gicj.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=326&Itemid=197

[5] Ms. Etab Al-Douri, a Member of the Parliament, expressed her belief that those arrested are innocent and stressed that the campaign is strategically sectarian in nature. She stated that if one examines the geographic location of the campaign, it becomes evident that it is systematically concentrated in particular sect-dominated areas, and that a review of past operations and campaigns demonstrates that it is always certain sects that are targeted. An interview given to Al-Sharqiya News on 20 August 2013.

[6] *"NGOs urge UN to stop death penalty in Iraq: the Government of Iraq can no longer arbitrarily execute people at will and with impunity"*, May 2013 at:
http://gicj.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=309&Itemid=197

[7] *"Iraq - Continuous interference of the executive in the judiciary"*, at:
http://gicj.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=116&Itemid=52

[8] *"Report on Human Rights in Iraq: January-June 2013"*, UNAMI and UN OHCHR, August 2013, Baghdad.

Court *"when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed at any civilian population, a "forced disappearance" qualifies as a crime against humanity, and thus is not subject to a statute of limitations".*

The situation in Iraq is dramatic. NGOs continuously emphasises how widespread and systematic is this misconduct and its impact on the Iraqi society.[9] Rough estimates indicate more than one million persons have disappeared in Iraq. According to the UN data, the country has the most disappeared in the world.[10]

The problem of the disappeared and/or missing persons in Iraq is treated with secrecy by the authorities and the given figures are downplayed and very unreliable. Iraq says it has no central database to try to link the unidentified bodies that have been buried anonymously with the list of names of the missing. Moreover, the victims' families are often reluctant to claim the bodies from the six Medico-Legal Institutes around the country for fear of reprisals. Even looking for missing relatives in hospitals is not safe. In addition, there are reports of bodies that end up buried in mass graves and are not recorded at the morgues.

Disappearances still occur on a very regular basis in Iraq. The most important parties involved now are the Iraqi army, police, various militias and terrorists group. 'Often, forced disappearance implies murder. The victim in such a case is first abducted, then illegally detained and often tortured; the victim is then killed, and the body is then hidden. Typically, a murder will be surreptitious, with the corpse disposed of in such a way as to prevent it ever being found, so that the person apparently vanishes. The party committing the murder has deniability, as there is no body to prove that the victim has actually died.'[11]
Moreover, the growing phenomenon of secret prisons in Iraq, which even international organizations have failed to locate, leads to a large number of reported and unreported cases of forced disappearances. "There is no safe place in Iraq. People can be disappeared and sent to secret, illegal detention centres anywhere in the country, without the knowledge of the family or the person's lawyer……Many are assassinated and buried in secret. Many others are charged with trumped-up terrorism charges."[12] According to the UN Human Rights Council, "secret detention amounts to an enforced disappearance."[13]

We call on:

- the Iraqi authorities to undertake genuine actions to ensure the implementation of its international obligations under both international humanitarian law and human rights law;
- the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions and the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to visit Iraq and fully investigate all cases of arbitrary detention, torture and ill treatment;

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[9] *"Iraq- Attacks and disappearances involving the Ministry of Higher Education Personnel"*, November 2012 at: http://gicj.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=122&Itemid=52

[10] The ICRC's Paul-Henri Arni said that Iraq after three conflicts – a war with Iran in the 1980s, the first Gulf War in 1991 and the U.S.-led operation in 2003 – was probably facing the highest number of missing people in the world. *"Accounting for missing people is vital for stability in a post-war scenario – ICRC"*, James Kilner, AlertNet London, November 2009 at: http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MUMA-7XS4PY?OpenDocument

[11] *"Enforced Disappearance: The Missing Persons of Iraq"*, Dirk Adriaensens at: http://www.globalresearch.ca/enforced-disappearance-the-missing-persons-of-iraq/22164

[12] *"Iraq: Enforced disappearances – "a long-term challenge"* at http://www.irinnews.org/report/91622/iraq-enforced-disappearances-a-long-term-challenge

[13] In addition, "secret detention effectively takes detainees outside the legal framework and renders safeguards contained in international instruments meaningless, including, importantly, that of *habeas corpus"*. See: Joint Study on Global Practices in Relation to Secret Detention in the Context of Countering Terrorism, UN Document A/HRC/13/42, May 2010.

- the UN and the Human Rights Council to ensure that all human rights violations in committed in Iraq during the sanction, and since the 2003 invasion and occupation to be investigated by an international independent body;
- The reinstatement of the position of a Special Rapporteur for Iraq.

BRussels Tribunal, Arab Lawyers Association- UK, Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ), Association of Humanitarian Lawyers (AHL), The International League of Iraqi Academics (ILIA), The Iraqi Commission on Human Rights (ICHR), Women Will Association (WWA), Organization for Widows and Orphans (OWO), Ikraam Center for Human Rights, Belgian Peace Movement, Ligue camerounaise des droits de l'homme, Monitoring Net of Human Rights in Iraq (MHRI), Women Solidarity for an Independent and Unified Iraq, Alliance to Renew Co-operation among Humankind, International Coalition against War Criminals (ICAWC), Medical Aid for the Third World, Association of Iraqi Diplomats (AID), The African Association of Human Rights (AAHR), Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Arab World, Moroccan Association for the Right to a Fair Trial, Americans Against the War (France), General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW), The International Action Center (IAC), American Worker, Association of Iraqi Intellectuals and Academics, The International Network of Arab Human Rights NGOs, America In Solidarity, Federacion De Mujeres Cubanas, Association of Victims of American Occupation Prisons, International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON), International Lawyers.org, International Society of Iraqi Scientists, The Perdana Global Peace Foundation, Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War, Spanish Campaign against the Occupation and for Iraq Sovereignty- CEOSI, Arab Cause Solidarity Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, El Taller International, World Courts of Women, Center for Development Studies- India, Wariscrime.org, Action Center for Justice, 1% A Peace Army.org, A Bigger Tent.org, Agir contre la guerre (France), American Voices Abroad (Berlin, Germany), American Voices Abroad Military Project (Europe), Anti War Fair, Arizona Christian Peacemakers, Armbands for Peace, Arms Against War, Artists Against the War, Backbone Campaign, Be the Change, Become Active, Bike for Peace (Germany), Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Bird Dogger Org., Children of Iraq Association (UK),Bloomington Peace Action Coalition (IN), Blue State News Only, Boston Mobilization, Bring Democracy Back, Bring Them Home,Butterfly Gardeners Association, Citizens for Accountability on Iraq, California for Democracy, Camp Casey Blog, Camp U.S. Strike for Peace Campaign, Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran, Canada Watch, Carolina Peace Resource Center (SC), Cartoon Free America, Catalysts of Hope, Central Colorado Coalition on the Iraq War, Chester County Peace Movement (PA), Cindy Sheehan Org., Cities for Peace, Citizens for Legitimate Government, Citizens for Peace & Justice, Human Rights for all-Morocco, Christian Clergy For Impeachment.com, Clothing of the American Mind, Coalition Against Election Fraud, Coalition for Impeachment Now (COIN), Code Pink, the Iraqi Association for Human Rights (IAHR), Al-Basa'er Media Association, Consumers for Peace.org, Dhafir Trial.org, DC Anti-War Network.org, Democracy Action, Democracy for America Meetup (Birmingham, AL), Olympia Citizens' Movement to Impeach Bush/Cheney (WA), One Million Reasons, Operation Cease Fire, Operation Impeachment, Orange County Grassroots (CA), Out of Iraq, Out of Iraq Bloggers Caucus, Patrick Henry Democratic Club, Patriotic Pulse, Patriots for Gore, Peace Action, Peace Action Wisconsin, Peace and Accountability, Peace Drum, Peace Majority, Peace Movement Aotearoa (New Zealand), Peace Reso.org, Peninsula Peace and Justice Center (Palo Alto, CA), People's Campaign for the Constitution, People Powered Impeachment, People's Email Network, People's Glorious Five Year Plan, Picnic to Impeach, Pixel4Peace.org, Playing in Traffic, PledgeToImpeach.org, Political Cooperative, Politics and Art, Progressive Action Alliance, Progressive Action Center, Progressive Avenues, Progressive Democrats of America, Progressive Democrats of Hawaii Project Filibuster, Project for the OLD American Century, Refusing to Kill.org, Rescue Our Democracy, Sacramento for Democracy (CA), St Pete for Peace (FL), Sampsonia Way, San Diego for Democracy, School of the Americas Watch, Sheehan for Congress, South Florida Impeachment Coalition, South Mountain Peace Action (Maplewood & South Orange, NJ), Springs Action Alliance (CO), Stop the War Coalition (UK), Students for Impeachment, Students Towards a New Direction (STAND), Summit County Progressive Democrats (OH), The Known UnKnowns, The Politically Incorrect Cabaret, The Rational Response Squad, Think Blue Dems, Time for Accountability, Toronto Coalition to Stop the War (Canada), Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International, True Blue Liberal.org, Trumansburg Impeachment (NY), Truth Empowered, Truthtelling Project, UC Nuclear, Underground Action Alliance, Unitarian Universalist Peace and Justice Group (Nantucket, MA), United Blue USA, United for Veterans (Wayne, MI), United

Progressives, Upbeat Defiance, US Peace Memorial, US Tour of Duty: Iraq Veterans and Military Families Demand the Truth, Velvet Revolution, Vet Gulf March, Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27, Virginia Grassroots Coalition, Voters for Peace, We the People for Peace, We the People Network, We the People Now, We The People United Bangladesh.org, Peace Surge, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (WA), Stop the War (UK), U.S. Peace Council, World Can't Wait.org, World Prout Assembly, Komite Internazionalista- Basque, Asociación Paz, Igualdad y Solidaridad Internacional, Arab Cause Solidarity Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, Málaga, Spain, Stop Fascism Action Network, The Asian Jurists Centre, Association of Human Rights Defenders in Iraq (AHRDI), The African Center for Human Rights (ACHR), Veterans for Peace, Your Declaration of Independence.org , Arab Lawyers Network-UK, Conservative Centre of Environmental & Reserves in Fallujah (CCERF), Willie Nelson Peace Research Institute, Studies Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, The Iraqi Centre for Human Rights, Association internationale des droits de l'homme NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/180

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 1
Organizational and procedural matters

Joint written statement* submitted by Save the Children International, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[20 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-11565
1411565

Please recycle

Human rights council
High level panel on human rights mainstreaming
The protection and promotion of the human rights of migrants

Submission from the Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move[1]

Children make up a significant part of the large-scale and complex population movements currently taking place in many parts of the world and the number of children who are 'on the move' is growing dramatically. Migration can offer children and their families important opportunities to improve their lives. However, too many children who migrate are at risk of harm during their journey. It is essential that the rights and protection framework for these children be improved. This will help ensure that the children on the move today, and the many millions who are likely to migrate in years to come, are better protected from exploitation, abuse and violence, and can fully contribute to their own future as well as to the development of their societies.

The Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move welcomes the decision of the Human Rights Council to hold its 2014 High Level Panel discussion on the theme of '*the human rights of migrants*' and calls on UN agencies, States Parties and relevant stakeholders to **ensure that the rights of children on the move**[2] **are fully discussed during this panel**. This is an important opportunity for UN agencies, Governments and other stakeholders to reflect on how to ensure that the specific needs and human rights of children on the move are explicitly addressed by the international community and in domestic policies and adequately mainstreamed into the human rights system.

Background

35 million international migrants worldwide are under the age of 20 (representing 16 % of the total migrant population) and 11 million are children between the ages of 15 and 19 years. Almost half of all migrants are female[3]. Many children or young people move alone, on a permanent or on a seasonal basis for various reasons, such as to escape from poverty, abuse, violence or conflict or to access education and employment opportunities. Almost half of all forcibly displaced people globally are children: over 12 million girls and boys[4].

The reasons, patterns and consequences of children's movement are diverse and complex. For many children, leaving their home communities promises the chance of a better life, an escape from poverty, abuse, violence or conflict and a better opportunity to access jobs, education and basic services.

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[1] The Inter-Agency Working Group on Children on the Move includes: Save the Children, UNICEF, ILO, IOM, UNHCR, Terre des Hommes, World Vision, Plan International, the African Movement of Working Children and Youths (AMWCY/MAEJT), Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA), the Oak Foundation and individual experts and academics. UN agencies and NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

[2] The Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move adopts a holistic focus on child migration by recognising the umbrella definition: ***"Children on the move" which are children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement while it may open up opportunities might also place them at risk (or at an increased risk) of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence".*** While not exhaustive, this definition brings together children who have been trafficked; children seeking asylum; children who migrate (e.g. to pursue better life opportunities, look for work or education or to escape exploitative or abusive situations at home); and children displaced by conflict or natural disasters.

[3] IOM Gender and Migration Fact Sheet at:
http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/brochures_and_info_sheets/gender_factsheet_en.pdf

[4] Based on children as 47% of 25.9 million refugees and IDPs under UNHCR protection (UNHCR's Global Trends, 2011), mentioned in UNHCR (2012), A Framework for the Protection of Children, p.7

However, in the absence of protection services and support, children on the move, especially if they are traveling unaccompanied, are at high risk of abuse including physical violence, trafficking, and various forms of exploitation either during their journey or when they reach a new destination. Recent evidence suggests further that migrant children in child labour face more adverse working conditions than non-migrant child workers when comparing working hours, exposure to work hazards, bondage, violence and isolation[5].

Children on the move may also face discrimination and, because of their migration status, additional barriers when trying to seek assistance, protection and services. Many of these children may find themselves trapped in a conflict or crisis situation where their lives are at risk, they are highly vulnerable to violence, detention or even recruitment into armed groups or to abduction[6]. Children who may have international protection needs may face difficulties in accessing asylum procedures because of the lack of specific measures such as child-friendly asylum procedures and accessible information to support them.

A range of studies on children on the move indicate that policies often do not adequately respond to the specific needs of these children or are applied in ways that are not reflective of the best interests of the child.[7] Lack of coherence between migration and child protection policies is compounded by the lack of coordination in protection systems that channel different categories of children on the move (eg. trafficked children, street children, refugees, etc.) into different category-oriented protection responses and services which are subject to often conflicting political priorities. Children who are on the move, either voluntarily or involuntarily, often move in and out of different categories within the same journey or over time and, as such, they need protection and support mechanisms that are holistic, coherent and coordinated within and between countries.

Despite being obliged under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of all children – irrespective of their status or place of origin – many governments still perceive children on the move as threats or offenders against migration laws, leaving them without adequate protection and often subject to prosecution, detention or unsafe return. At the international level, despite the growing mobility of children, development, migration and national and international child protection laws and policies are not adequately addressing the specific needs of children on the move or responding to the violations of rights that these children often experience during and after migration.

Chidren on the Move in the international agenda on human rights, child protection and migration and development

Until recently, despite the growing number and their extreme vulnerability, children on the move have been almost invisible in national and international debates. Children are slowly becoming a more recognised part of global migration flows and there is a growing interest in the reasons, patterns and consequences of children's movement.

In 2012, the **UN Committee on the Rights of the Child held its Day of General Discussion** on the theme of children in the context of international migration. In its outcome document, the Committee listed 35 key recommendations to ensure that the rights of migrant children are respected, protected and fulfilled in line with the UNCRC.

During the **UN GA High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development** held in October 2013, Member States unanimously adopted a Declaration that renews their commitment to the protection of the human rights

[5] ILO & CHI, *Child migrants in child labour - An invisible group in need of attention: A study based on child helpline case records*, 2012.

[6] See Save the Children 2012, Voices of Children on the Move, consultation with children on the move for the UNCRC Committee DGD September 2012. http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/6666.pdf

7 Dottridge, M., Kids abroad: ignore them, abuse them or protect them, Terre des Hommes International Federation 2008; Feneyrol, O., Quelle protection pour les enfants concernes par la mobilite en Afrique de L'Ouest?, BIT, Plan, Enda jeunesse action, Mouvement Africain des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs, IOM, Save the Children, Terre des hommes, Unicef, 2011; Plan and Consortium for Street Children (2011) Still on the street – still short of rights. Analysis of policy and programmes related to street involved children; Reale,D. (2008) Away from Home, Save the Children; UNHCR Guidelines on the Best Interests of the Child, 2008; World Vision International, 2010, 10 Things You Need to Know About Labour Trafficking;

of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, and strongly condemned manifestations of xenophobia, racism and intolerance. Importantly, in the declaration, States Parties expressed their commitment to protect the human rights of migrant children, given their vulnerability, particularly unaccompanied migrant children, and to provide for their health, education and psychosocial development, ensuring that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in policies of integration, return and family reunification.

However, more focussed action is required to ensure that children on the move are adequately supported and protected. **The Human Rights Council High Level Panel on human rights mainstreaming** provides an opportune moment for the international community and for States to make specific commitments, in line with the HLD declaration and the UNCRC Committee recommendations, to ensure that the rights of children on the move become a central part of an effective and inclusive agenda bringing together the respect of human rights, child protection and migration and development policies.

We are calling the international community and political leaders to take national and international action to step up efforts to protect children on the move from being harmed.

In particular, the Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move calls on Member States participating in the High Level Panel on human rights mainstreaming at the Human Rights Council to:

- **Ensure that the specific needs and rights of children on the move are explicitly discussed during the high level panel and specifically addressed and mainstreamed into the human rights system.** This means identifying concrete measures to ensure that the UNCRC is applied in full when addressing the situation of children on the move and that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration in all actions in their regard. Migration, child rights and child protection policies should be coherent and based on the UNCRC and other relevant human rights instruments. Specific procedures and tools should be in place to identify, listen to, protect and assist children on the move, in particular those most vulnerable, including in emergency situations and children in need of international protection, including asylum-seeking and refugee children. It is crucial that the protection and fulfilment of the rights of children on the move are adequately addressed by the human rights system and all relevant UN and treaty bodies.

- **Establish effective and comprehensive child protection systems that protect, promote and fulfil the rights of children on the move in accordance to the UNCRC and independent of their migration status.** Such systems should implement coordinated responses across sectors for all children based on the best interests of the child and inclusive of the specific needs of children on the move. They should include mechanisms to ensure the participation of children and of children's organisations.

- **Agree on a common child protection agenda between countries on which to base concrete proposals for normative, institutional and procedural solutions for cooperation and coordination between countries of origin, transit and destination in order to address the situation of children on the move.**

- **Secure a strong integrated child protection goal in the post-2015 framework with specific targets and indicators addressing children on the move, both in emergency and nonemergency settings. Targets and indicators relevant to the protection of children in the context of migration should also be mainstreamed in other relevant goals within that framework.**

- **Support the call for an annual panel discussion at the Human Rights Council on the protection of the human rights of migrants and ensure that the rights of children on the move represent a central part of the discussion within such panels including listening to children's voices in order address and include their views.**

- **Ensure the prevention and reduction of statelessness amongst child migrants and children of migrant parents through concerted state action.**

The Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move calls on States to translate into action the commitments outlined in the Declaration of the 2013 High Level Dialogue on Migration and

Development and the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child by:

- **Establishing and/or strengthening integrated and inclusive child protection systems** that address both prevention and response throughout the migration process, in a coordinated manner across sectors and allows for non-discriminatory access for all children, including non-nationals. Such systems should also invest in local, community-based systems of protection, such as peer support, which reflect the local context, needs and social norms in place, as well as in monitoring of workplaces that tend to feature young migrant workers. They should include child sensitive and age appropriate procedures to allow early identification of children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children and children in need of international protection and procedures for appropriate protection and short and long-term assistance and support for all children on the move

- **Providing for the health, education, psychosocial development and protection of children on the move** and ensure that the **best interests of the child** are a primary consideration in all action in their regard, including in the search for both short-term and durable solutions.

- **Ensuring that migration, child rights and child protection policies are coherent and based on the UNCRC** and other key international instruments, that individual measures and decisions which have an impact on children on the move are guided by the principles enshrined in the UNCRC, particularly best interests of the child, non-discrimination, right to express their views, and non-criminalization for irregular migration.

- **Establishing transnational coordination and cooperation mechanisms** with state and non-state actors between countries to ensure that children are protected through all stages of their migration journey, despite moving in an out of different migrant "categories". This may for example be needed when the child's identity, age and circumstances must be established and assessed.

In May 2014 the Swedish government will host the **Global Forum on Migration and Development.** This is another opportunity for governments and the international community to make a serious commitment to prioritizing children on the move within the migration and development agenda through concrete national plans, policies and through the inclusion of specific targets and indicators on children in the context of migration in the post-2015 framework.

For further information, please contact: Daniela Reale, Exploited Children Adviser, Save the Children UK, d.reale@savethechildren.org.uk (serving as Secretariat of the IAG COM).

United Nations A/HRC/25/NGO/181

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 March 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-fifth session
Agenda item 2
Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

Written statement* submitted by the Norwegian Refugee Council, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[20 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-11776
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Internal displacement in Sri Lanka

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I. Executive summary

Four-and-a-half years after the military victory of Sri Lankan government forces over the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), there were up to 90,000 people still living in internal displacement. The situation of tens of thousands of more than 480,000 returned IDPs and thousands in permanent relocation sites also remains a cause for concern.

Current, returned and relocated IDPs are still discriminated against as a result of their displacement. Challenges include the military occupation and state acquisition of land, the militarisation of civilian life, and gaps in the areas of housing, water and sanitation, livelihoods and food.

Sri Lanka has no legislation or policy on internal displacement. The current draft policy[1] needs to be revised in order to bring it in line with international standards. Previous and more comprehensive Sri Lankan documents including the 2008 draft bill on IDPs' protection and the 2008 national consultation on their status are still relevant and should be built upon.

II. Internal displacement in Sri Lanka

Current IDPs

It is estimated that there are up to 90,000 IDPs in Sri Lanka, tens of thousands among them with host communities[2] and more than 7,000 IDPs in camps.[3]

Return

Tens of thousands among the more than 480,000 returnees went back without adequate shelter, water, sanitation and other infrastructure being in place. They have not been able to rebuild their homes, access basic services and restore their livelihoods or secure new ones.[4]

Relocation

The government moved several thousand people to permanent relocation sites.[5] They are no longer officially counted as IDPs, even though relocation has reportedly not always been the result of a voluntary or fully informed settlement choice.[6]

Northern Muslim IDPs

In 1990 the LTTE expelled the entire Muslim population of Northern province, or around 75,000 people, from Northern province.[7] Around 60,000 found shelter in Puttalam district in North Western province.[8] Over more than 20 years in displacement, second and third generations have been born, and in 2009 their number stood at 86,000.[9]

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[1] http://www.resettlementmin.gov.lk/download/resettlement-policy-updated-on-30-11-2013-1.pdf
[2] NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013
[3] DSPG, September 2013, p.2, 4 (on file with NRC-IDMC); NRC-IDMC interview, December 2013
[4] NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013
[5] For a list of relocation sites see NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: Almost five years of peace but tens of thousands of war-displaced still without solution, 4 February 2014, pp.2, 7.
[6] NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: A Hidden Displacement Crisis, 31 October 2012, pp.9-12; NRC-IDMC interviews, November 2013 and January 2014

While conditions for sustainable return were not in place, community leaders and politicians reportedly put pressure on northern Muslim IDPs to register as returned.[10] However, by mid-2012 only 21,500 (or 25 per cent) were living permanently in the return areas. At least 51,600 (or 60 per cent) were registered as returned but were commuting between Puttalam and their home areas.[11] Only some among those who have wished to integrate locally in Puttalam district have been able to register as residents and voters there.[12]

III. Main issues of concern

The government equates return with an end to displacement. However, the mere physical movement of IDPs back to their homes does not mean that return is sustainable.[13] In Sri Lanka the infrastructure, assistance and administrative conditions needed to achieve durable solutions have not always been in place.[14]

Land issues

Circular 2013/1[15] reinforces the country's Prescription Ordinance by giving secondary occupants priority over original owners.[16] This contradicts the right to restitution as expressed in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GP 30) and the Pinheiro Principles (PP 17.2).[17] The government's Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission thus recommended that the ordinance be suspended for the duration of the armed conflict in the areas it affected.[18] The recommendation has not been implemented.

In addition, a mechanism to deal with conflicting claims on land is needed if tensions such as those between returning Tamils and Muslims over rival claims to the same land in Mannar district are to be addressed.[19]

IDPs in some relocation sites have been provided with housing but not with documentation nor compensation for their original land and property.[20] Many staying with host communities had been tenants and became homeless as a result of their displacement, but have not been compensated.[21] Loss of land and homes is also an issue for internally displaced property owners. Second and third generation IDPs, including northern Muslim IDPs, are particularly vulnerable to being left without land.[22]

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[7] Citizens' Commission on the Expulsion of Muslims from the Northern Province by the LTTE in October 1990 (Citizens' Commission), The Quest for Redemption: The Story of the Northern Muslims, November 2011, p.1

[8] UNHCR, 2004, on file with NRC-IDMC

[9] Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL), National Protection and Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons Project, no date, Phase Out Report 2002-2011, Puttalam

[10] NRC-IDMC interviews, 2012

[11] NRC-IDMC interview, October 2012

[12] NRC-IDMC interviews, February and December 2012

[13] Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, April 2010, p.5

[14] NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013

[15] Land Commissioner General's Department, Circular Number 2013/01: Accelerated Programme on Solving Post Conflict State Lands Issues in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, January 2013.

[16] The Prescription Ordinance recognises the right to ownership of someone who has occupied another's private land for more than 10 years. Cited in: Sundaram Sriskandarajah, Ramalingam Chakrawarthy Karunakaran, Mathiaparanan Abraham Sumanthiran, Legal Analysis of Property Issues affecting Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees in Sri Lanka, January 2003, p.9. In the context of a 26-year-long conflict and the protracted displacement it caused, this is problematic.

[17] DSPG, September 2013, p.6

[18] Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation (LLRC), Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation, 16 December 2011, p.241

[19] Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), Brief Commentary: Accelerated Programme on Solving Post Conflict State Lands Issues in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Land Circular: 2013/01, March 2013.

[20] DSPG, 4 June 2013, p.2, on file with NRC-IDMC

[21] NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013

[22] NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: Almost five years of peace but tens of thousands of war-displaced still without solution, 4 February 2014, pp.8-9.

Militarisation

The Sri Lankan military continues to maintain a significant presence in the north,[23] including through occupying private land, which prevents the return of over 26,000 IDPs.[24] In 2013 the government began acquiring some of this land under the Land Acquisition Act.[25] Acquisition notices state as "public purposes" the establishment of military bases and the creation of a military-run holiday resort, and more than 2,000 IDPs have challenged the government in court. No rulings have yet been made.[26]

The military presence in the north and its monitoring of civilians has contributed to feelings of insecurity.[27] With numbers of female-headed households being high,[28] there are reports that women and girls are increasingly vulnerable to gender-based violence, by members both of the security forces and their own communities[29]. Current and former IDPs have also experienced restrictions on their freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of movement and other civil rights.[30] The military's involvement in agriculture and tourism has hampered returnees' livelihood efforts because they find it difficult to compete.[31]

Other obstacles

The lack of housing, sanitation facilities and access to drinking water are also serious concerns in conflict-affected areas, while some relocation sites have no health care or education facilities or access to public transport.[32]

Both current and former IDPs have struggled recovering livelihoods.[33] Household debt is significant[34] , and some IDP women have reportedly resorted to sex work in order to continue to stay with host families.[35] Food insecurity has gone up, and some displaced and host families have reportedly been living on two meals a day.[36]

National response

The Ministry of Resettlement leads on matters related to internal displacement within the Sri Lankan government. In addition, President Rajapaksa set up the Presidential Task Force for Resettlement, Development and Security in the

[23] UNHCR, June 2013, p.13, on file with NRC-IDMC
[24] NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013
[25] Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), Policy Brief: Politics, Policies and Practices with Land Acquisitions and Related Issues in the North and East of Sri Lanka, 19 November 2013, p.11
[26] Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), Policy Brief: Politics, Policies and Practices with Land Acquisitions and Related Issues in the North and East of Sri Lanka, 19 November 2013, p.45; Colombo Telegraph, 1474 Northern Tamils Petition Appeal Court To Help Prevent Grab Of Their Homes By Rajapaksa Regime, 15 May 2013; Colombo Telegraph, 702 More Jaffna Tamils Petition Appeal Court To Prevent Damage To Their Tesawalamai Rights By Land Grab Of Rajapaksa regime, 28 May 2013; Colombo Telegraph, Jaffna Tamils' Land Grab FR Cases: Justice Sripavan Advises DSG How To Grab Lands Correctly, 12 June 2013.
[27] UNHCR, June 2013, pp.12-14
[28] According to one estimate there are 40,000 female-headed households in Northern province. Raksha Vasudevan, Everyday Resistance: Female Headed Households in Northern Sri Lanka, May 2013.
[29] Office of the United Nation's High Comissioner for Human rights (OHCHR), Oral update of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on promoting reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka, 25 September 2013; OCHA, 14 May-2 June 2013; UNHCR, June 2013, p.10
[30] NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: A Hidden Displacement Crisis, 31 October 2012, p.7
[31] NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: A Hidden Displacement Crisis, 31 October 2012, pp.7-8
[32] Government of Sri Lanka, 10,250 houses completed in Sri Lanka under Indian housing project in 2013, 2 January 2014; IFRC, Sri Lanka: Support for internally displaced people Emergency appeal n° MDRLK002 Operations Update n° 14, 9 January 2014, p.3; DSPG, September 2013, p.13; 4 June 2013, p.2
[33] DSPG, September 2013, p.4
[34] UNHCR, June 2003, p.24
[35] NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013
[36] IRIN, Food insecurity, debt rise in Sri Lanka's north, 23 September 2013; NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013

Northern Province (PTF) in May 2009, which has been the main decision-making body on all matters related to reconstruction and IDPs' return.[37]

Sri Lanka's national human rights action plan for 2011 to 2016 includes the development of a policy and/or legislation on internal displacement.[38] In 2013 the Ministry of Resettlement published a "draft resettlement policy",[39] which contains a number of useful elements but has significant shortcomings too. It focuses only on internal displacement due to conflict and only on the phase immediately after displacement. It does not explain the specifics of implementing the policy in the Sri Lankan context, including reference to the institutions and organisations responsible for doing so. Further, key stakeholders including IDPs need to be consulted and participate in the policy development process.

International response

Administrative barriers and an opaque approval process make humanitarian and development programming and long-term planning difficult. Decision-makers are said to treat projects that include capacity building and psychosocial support with suspicion.[40]

No comprehensive assessment of progress towards durable solutions has been undertaken in Sri Lanka, but it is hoped that the joint needs assessment the government plans to undertake with humanitarian and development organisations will at least partially fill this gap.[41]

Since late 2012, international organisations have shifted their focus from humanitarian to development assistance. Funding for both has dropped off significantly since the World Bank categorised Sri Lanka as a lower middle-income country.[42] Longer-term funding and support for protection work, including from the development sector and bilateral donors, is much needed if Sri Lanka's current and former IDPs are to rebuild their lives in a sustainable way.

IV. Recommendations

The Sri Lankan government should take the following key steps to ensure that current, returned and relocated IDPs can find solutions to their displacement. They will also help address the grievances that lie at the root of the country's civil war:

1. Adopt an IDP policy which meets international standards. The current draft policy should be revised so that it addresses not only conflict-induced displacement, but also that caused by natural disasters and development projects, as well as all phases of displacement up to and including the achievement of durable solutions. It should be developed with the consultation and participation of stakeholders including IDPs, host communities, civil society organisations, and local authorities; and it should facilitate the implementation of the Guiding Principles and other relevant international standards in the Sri Lankan context. Both the stalled Sri Lankan draft bill of 2008[43] and the recommendations of the 2008 national consultation on the status of IDPs and durable solutions[44] are still relevant and should be built upon.

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[37] International Crisis Group (ICG), Sri Lanka's North II: Rebuilding under the Military, 16 March 2012, pp.12-13. The majority of PTF's 19 members are current or former members of the military. Ministry of Defense, Resettlement, development and security in the northern providence : President appoints Task Force Mandated to report within one year, 30 December 2010; Weiss, 2012, p.172

[38] Government of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka: National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2011-2016, 2012, p.122

[39] Ministry of Resettlement, Draft Resettlement Policy, 30 November 2013

[40] NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: Almost five years of peace but tens of thousands of war-displaced still without solution, 4 February 2014, p.12

[41] OCHA, Sri Lanka Humanitarian Bulletin, June 2013, p.1; NRC-IDMC interview, November 2013

[42] OCHA, Sri Lanka Humanitarian Bulletin, p.1; IRIN, Analysis: Greater investment needed in Sri Lanka's north, 14 October 2013

[43] HRCSL, Protection of Internally Displaced Persons Bill, 8 August 2008

[44] MoDMHR, National Consultation on the Status of Internally Displaced Persons (due to conflict) Within the framework for Durable Solutions, Colombo, Sri Lanka (23-25 September 2008), November 2008, pp.15-20

2. Defuse tensions between different ethnic communities. Building on the recommendations of its Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, the government should initiate a meaningful reconciliation process between the country's Sinhala, Tamil, and Muslim communities to prevent further tensions between them, in particular those who have been displaced. This should include the setting up of a mechanism to resolve complex land issues. The government also needs to take a clear stand against recent attacks by extremist Buddhists against Muslim religious sites and business properties in different parts of the country.

3. Restore land to IDPs and reduce military presence. A true post-war transition will require a reduction in the military presence in the north and east and for military occupied land to be returned to IDPs. Where this is not possible, adequate compensation must be given. The local administration needs to be fully controlled by civilian officials instead of the military.

4. Reinvigorate employment. Instead of spending its resources on large infrastructure projects, the government must reinvigorate employment levels by fostering small businesses and support the creation of long-term employment for current, returned and relocated IDPs.

5. Assess the most pressing concerns of those in need. Together with its humanitarian and development partners the government must make sure that the planned Joint Needs Assessment includes all aspects relevant to the situation of current and former IDPs.

V. Attachment

The above is drawn from the following report:

NRC-IDMC, Sri Lanka: Almost five years of peace but tens of thousands of war-displaced still without solution, 4 February 2014

About the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (NRC-IDMC) is a world leader in the monitoring and analysis of the causes, effects and responses to internal displacement. NRC-IDMC advocates for better responses to the needs of the millions of people worldwide who are displaced within their own countries as a consequence of conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations, and natural or man-made disasters. It is also at the forefront of efforts to promote greater respect for the basic rights of internally displaced people (IDPs). IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

What we do:
- Promote appropriate responses to internal displacement through targeted advocacy
- Provide timely, accessible and relevant information on internal displacement worldwide
- Develop research and analysis to help shape policies and practices that have positive outcomes for IDPs
- Provide training and support to country-based policy-makers and practitioners with a responsibility to protect IDPs

Who do we target?
IDMC is best placed to effect positive change for IDPs through advocacy to influence the decisions and practices of duty bearers and all those with a responsibility or capacity to promote or fulfil the rights of IDPs.

How do we operate?
As information on internal displacement is often controversial and politically sensitive, NRC-IDMC must continue to operate and be seen to operate as an independent and effective global monitor of this widespread phenomenon. NRC-IDMC has become an indispensable resource for anyone seeking impartial data and analysis on internal displacement, independent of political or operational considerations. www.internal-displacement.org.

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